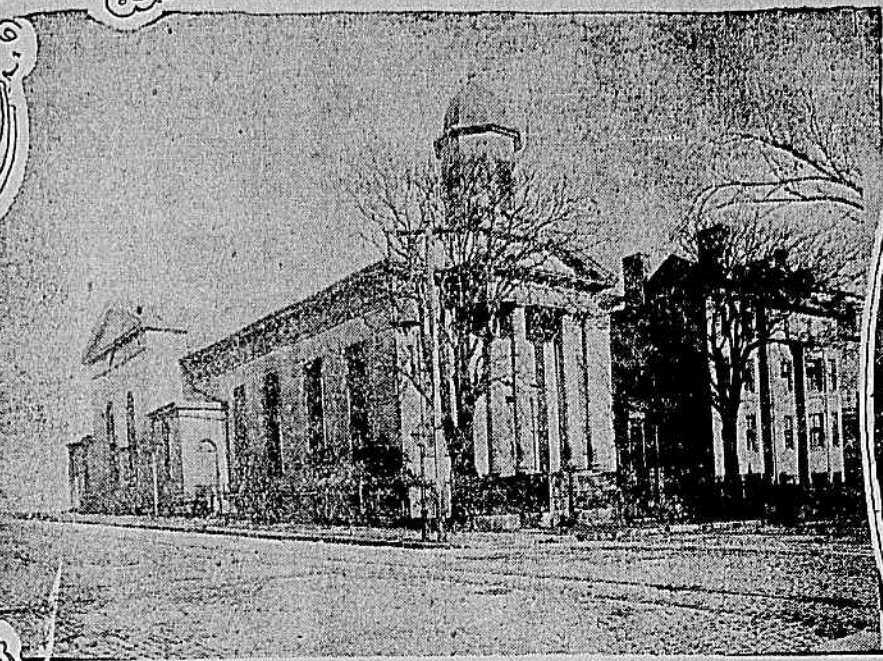


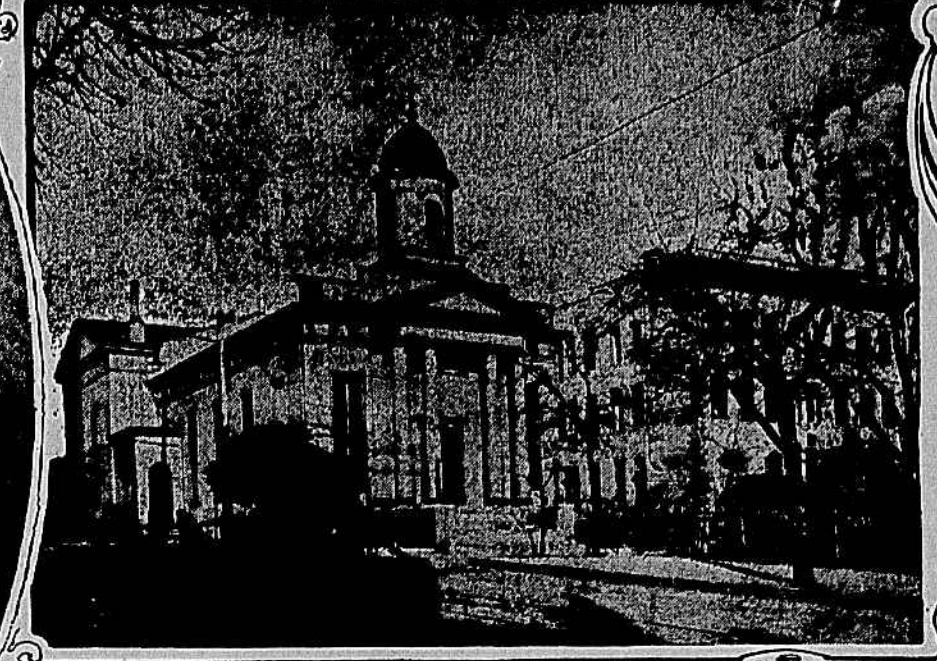
# ST. PETER'S CELEBRATES DIAMOND JUBILEE



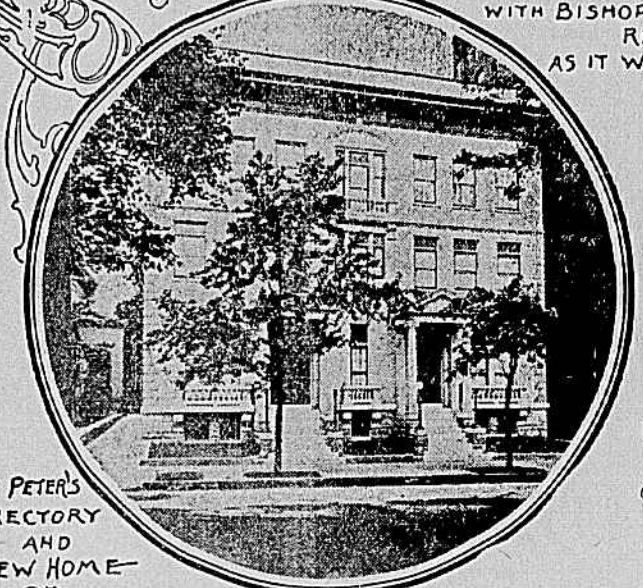
ST. PETER'S OLD CATHEDRAL  
WITH BISHOP'S AND PRIESTS'  
RECTORY  
AS IT WAS UNTIL 1907



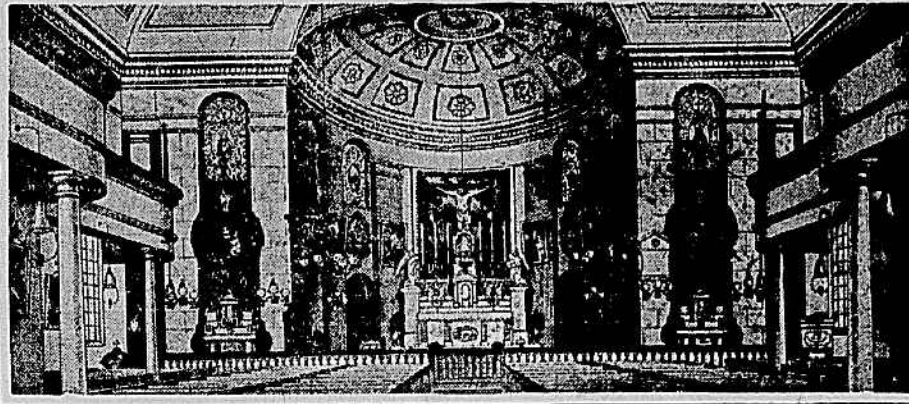
REV. TIMOTHY O'BRIEN  
FIRST PASTOR AND BUILDER OF  
ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL



ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL  
AS IT NOW STANDS



ST. PETER'S  
RECTORY  
AND  
NEW HOME  
OF  
MCGILL CATHOLIC UNION AND KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS



INTERIOR OF THE OLD CATHEDRAL AS IT WAS IN BISHOP MCGILL'S TIME



BISHOP VAN DE VYVER

BY DR. F. J. MAGRI.

The celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of St. Peter's Church, which will be formally inaugurated to-day, promises to be one of the most imposing ceremonies ever held within the walls of the old cathedral. And well it should be, for no other event in the history of the church can equal in importance that of the completion of its three-fourths of a century's existence as a place of Catholic worship. And to add, if possible, to the greatness of the occasion, we should recall that from the walls of St. Peter's have gone forth some of America's most celebrated church dignitaries—namely, his eminence, Cardinal Gibbons; their graces, Archbishops Keane and Janssens, and their lordships, Bishops Van de Vyver, Kelley, O'Connell, Becker, McGill and Whelan.

We may also mention the fact that priests of the worth and renown of men like the founder of the church, the Rev. Timothy O'Brien, have labored in the old parish with a zeal truly apostolic, and last, but by no means least, we should bear in mind that St. Peter's has possessed and does possess now probably more than ever a congregation of men, women and children so staunch, so loyal, so zealous devoted to God and to country as to challenge comparison with any other congregation of similar size within these United States.

No wonder then that the Diamond Jubilee celebration is to be invested with all the pomp and ceremony befitting so great an occasion. No wonder that at the 7 o'clock mass of to-day, practically all the adult members of St. Peter's congregation will approach Holy Communion in a body, the children doing likewise on Monday morning. No wonder that 500 children will sing at the 9 o'clock mass the sweetest and most joyous of carols. No wonder that the Rt. Rev. Bishop of the Diocese, surrounded by priests of the city and State, will pontificate at the solemn mass of thanksgiving, to be celebrated at 11 o'clock this day, and will delight in telling the congregation of his joy in presiding at so unusual a celebration.

The officers of the mass will be: Archbishop, Very Rev. J. J. Bowler, pastor of St. Peter's; Deacons of Honor, Rev. W. A. O'Hara, of Keyser, and Rev. J. J. Massey, of Sacred Heart Cathedral; Deacon of the Mass, Rev. Charles Leitner, O. S. B., of the Benedictine Monastery, Mount St. Bernard, near St. Peter's; Master of Ceremonies, Rev. Joseph Magri, of St. Peter's.

Nor does the pontifical mass close the ceremonies of this, the first day of the celebration, for at 8 P. M. will be rendered grand solemn vespers with benediction and jubilee strains. The Very Rev. William A. O'Hara, pastor of Keyser, West Virginia, and one of the former altar boys of the parish.

On Monday, November 1, the Feast of All Saints, a solemn mass will be offered at 11 o'clock for all the living members of the parish. The sermon at this service will be delivered by the Rev. Charles E. Donahoe, pastor of St. Paul's Church, Portsmouth, who was born and bred in the parish, and formerly, whilst pastor of Fredericksburg, had his residence between Sundays at the old cathedral rectory. A unique idea of the celebration is to have all the Virginia priests who were born in the parish take a principal part in the ceremony.

The Music and Ceremonies.

Needless to say that the special music for the different services in course of preparation for weeks past will be rendered with all the grandeur and solemnity demanded by the very nature of the celebration. Three choirs, all under the skilled leadership of Mrs. Nina Randolph Archer, and embracing the men's choir, the boys' choir and the young girls' choir, will no doubt sing with telling effect the grand jubilee music. The Council

Second Mass, in four-part harmony for male voices, will be rendered for the first time in Richmond at the 11 o'clock masses to-day and to-morrow. Brother Charles, superior of the Xaverian Brothers, is to be master of ceremonies over the several scores of trained altar boys who will take part in the different ceremonies. Dressed in their purple cassocks, trimmed in red, with lace surplices or arrayed in flowing silk copes, the sanctuary boys will add color and impressiveness to the scene.

The altars of St. Peter's are to be decorated in gala attire for the joyous ceremonies of Sunday and Monday. Variegated flowers, green palms, burnished candelabra, with numerous lights, will lend beauty and dignity to the general effect. The decoration of the church is in charge of the sanctuary ladies, whose greatest happiness is to adorn fittingly during each succeeding year the temple of the Most High.

The Feast of All Souls. At 3 o'clock on All Souls' Day the celebration will be of a character different from that of the preceding days, a character not of joy, but of sorrow; for on that day will be offered at 9 o'clock, a solemn high requiem mass for all the deceased prelates, priests and people of the parish. The mass will be followed by the funeral ceremony for the dead, consisting of psalms, antiphons and versicles, all of which are to be chanted. The "Benedictus" to be sung by the choir of altar boys, is one of the most impressive portions of the service.

At 3 o'clock on All Souls' Day the members of the parish, together with the clergy and Catholics of the other parishes of this city and Manchester, will assemble in Mount Calvary Cemetery to take part in the services for all the dead buried there, to be conducted by Rt. Rev. Bishop Van de Vyver, with sermon by one of the priests.

The Seven Days' Festival Celebration. Following the triduum of church services, a seven days' jubilee festival celebration will begin to-morrow (Monday) in the halls and rooms on the ground floor of St. Peter's School, at Ninth and Marshall Streets, the entrance being on Marshall Street. The festival celebration will begin each evening at 8 o'clock, consisting, of course, the current Sunday. There will be a rest room, where the people may meet and exchange greetings, a room where lunches and light refreshments may be had, and a main hall, wherein will be located four small booths with dainty souvenir articles to be disposed of. There will be no charge for admission.

As regards the church services, so likewise as regards the festival celebration in the school building, the parish is invited to participate. The idea of this seven days' jubilee is a unique one. Each one of the seven days will represent an epoch in the 113 years' history of the old cathedral parish. The first, or missionary period, embraces the time elapsing from the coming of the first priest to Richmond in 1791—the Rev. John Dubois—to the arrival of the Rev. Timothy O'Brien in 1822. The second epoch, that of Father O'Brien, is notable for the building of St. Peter's Church. The remaining five periods refer successively to the administrations of the Rt. Rev. Bishops Whelan, McGill, Gibbons, Keane and Van de Vyver, the present able and beloved Bishop of Richmond.

The First Priest in Richmond.

The occasion of the diamond jubilee celebration calls for a brief historical recital concerning the old cathedral parish. The history of the parish, as well as that of Catholicity itself in the city of Richmond, begins, as stated above, in the year 1791, when Rev. John Dubois, a brilliant French priest, afterwards third Bishop of New York,

came to the capital city. He had letters of introduction from Lafayette to James Monroe, to the Randolphs and Lees, and to other prominent Virginia families. By the invitation of the General Assembly, then in session, Father Dubois celebrated in the old House of Delegates the first mass ever offered in Richmond. He obtained his support by teaching French, he being taught English by Patrick Henry himself.

His successor at Richmond was the Rev. T. C. Mongrand, who was in turn succeeded by the Revs. Xavier Michel, John Baxter, John Mahoney, James Walsh, James Hoerner and Father Schreber. During these years masses were said and other religious functions performed either in private houses or rooms temporarily rented for the purpose. Thus services were at one time held in a house on the south side of East Main Street, between Twelfth and Twenty-first Streets, at another time on Eighth Street near Cary, then again in a room at the old Union Hotel, at Nineteenth and Main Streets, and again on East Main Street, at the home of Mrs. Sarah Poppel.

Richmond's First Catholic Church. The first place of Catholic worship in Richmond to bear the semblance of a church was a small chapel leased for several years in 1815, and located on Main, near Twenty-seventh Street. The building was known by the name of "The Chapel," or "The Rocketts Church," or sometimes "The Sailors' Church," because the services therein were often attended by Catholic sailors.

In 1821 Father James Walsh had as his place of worship a room in the Southgate building on the eastern side of Broad and Eleventh Streets. Rev. Thomas Hore, his successor, opened, in 1824, a school on the east side of Fourteenth Alley, the second door above Exchange Alley, in which place he also celebrated mass on Sundays. In 1825 Father Hore built a small wooden church at Fourth and Marshall Streets, on land willed by Joseph Gallego, and now occupied by St. Joseph's Asylum. The masses of Father Hore were served by John Ahern, first president of the St. Vincent de Paul Confraternity, who will be remembered by many of the older inhabitants of Richmond as a staunch pillar of the church in his day. Father Hore lived on Third Street just back of the church. In 1828 Archbishop Whitfield, of Baltimore, paid a missionary visit to the little flock at Richmond.

Father Timothy O'Brien, a priest whose name is loved and revered in every Catholic family of the city, came to the capital city in the spring of 1832. During the year of his arrival he showed the true heroism of the Catholic priesthood in a cholera epidemic which swept off many inhabitants of the city. By his unselfish devotion to the sick and dying he won the hearts of people of all creeds in Richmond.

The Building of St. Peter's.

Through money collected by appeals at home and abroad, Father O'Brien was enabled, in 1834, to build St. Peter's Church, the dedication sermon being preached by Rev. Samuel Eggleston, D. D., of Baltimore. The church was the same in outward appearance then as now, with the exception that it extended back only as far as the transept, where the steeple now begins, and with the further exception of heavy wooden shutters to cover the windows. Father O'Brien lived in two rooms back of the church, the ground of which is now occupied by the sanctuary and sacristy.

The completion of the church was a cause for general rejoicing, and gave a new impetus to the spread of Catholicity. Now that the faithful had a fitting place of worship, Father O'Brien redoubled his priestly efforts, with the result that a considerable number of noted converts were made,

amongst whom was Mrs. Nicolai Johnston, mother of Dr. George Ben Johnston.

Likewise in 1834 did Father O'Brien found St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum, and invite into the diocese the Sisters of Charity, whose noble and unselfish work is known and appreciated throughout the State.

With the appointment by Rome of the Rt. Rev. Vincent Whelan as the first bishop to reside in the capital city, Bishop Kelly, 1821-1822, having lived at Norfolk, religion in Richmond, as well as in the entire diocese, was put on a firmer basis than ever. Coming to Richmond in 1841, Bishop Whelan selected as his residence one of the houses of the Thomas estate, on the northwest corner of Grace and Eighth Streets.

Bishop Whelan founds a Seminary. In 1841 the bishop founded a seminary and college on the Bolling Green Road, some two or three miles from the city, to which place he moved his headquarters. The first students afterwards won fame as missionary priests. Their names were Messrs. Fox, Devlin, Farrell, Plunkett, Geogan, Hewitt, Sullivan, Corcoran, Hamell, Lenaghan, Parke, Cunningham and O'Neill, the last being for the Georgia missions. The bishop acted as rector, and, when not teaching, made frequent journeys over the diocese.

Meantime, Father O'Brien was keeping up in Richmond, and even occasionally elsewhere, his wonderful apostolic work that has immortalized his name in the church annals of the State. From 1839 to 1842 Father Timothy O'Brien was assisted at St. Peter's by his brother, the Rev. John O'Brien, who the latter year was appointed pastor of Martinsburg. On January 6 the bishop raised to the priesthood, on old cathedral, the Rev. James Hewitt, the first priest ever ordained in Virginia.

As stated elsewhere, the priest's rectory, where Father O'Brien resided, was located during these years on the space now occupied by the sanctuary. The house consisted of five or six rooms. The entrance to it was from Eighth Street. Father O'Brien temporarily enlarged the church by adding to it the largest room of the house immediately adjoining the sanctuary.

In 1849 Bishop Whelan left Father

O'Brien in entire charge of the Richmond congregation and went to Wheeling, where he did splendid missionary work until 1850, when, the diocese being divided, he was appointed the first Bishop of Wheeling, the see of Richmond being at the same time assigned to Rt. Rev. John McGill, D. D., of the Louisville Diocese.

Departure of Father O'Brien.

The same year of the new bishop's arrival, Father O'Brien, being in need of well-earned rest after his strenuous labors of eighteen years, determined to retire from the diocese. The sorrow of the people was unbounded when it became known that the great apostle of religion was to depart from his field of labor. People of all denominations joined in the lament. Amidst the tears and protests of his flock, he tore himself from Richmond, the city that he so loved, and retired to Lowell, Mass., where, in the home of his brother and fellow-priest, the Rev. John O'Brien, on the 12th day of October, 1850, he rendered to God his pure soul. Thus died the great missionary, perhaps the greatest missionary who ever labored in Virginia. On the marble memorial tablet to be unveiled in the sanctuary shortly after the diamond jubilee celebration, are to be inscribed these simple but imperishable words:

"To the memory of the Rev. Timothy O'Brien, a native of Ireland, who, in 1832, came to Richmond, where, having erected St. Peter's Church in 1834, he labored with apostolic zeal for eighteen years. He died at Lowell, Mass., October 12, 1850.

"A priest of broad mind, of tireless energy and devoted to his work, he has forever impressed his name on this church and the people of this parish."

Directed in 1909 on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of St. Peter's Church."

Bishop McGill 1850-72.

Bishop McGill's rule over the see of Richmond was cast in stormy times. Including the period of the Know-Nothing and that of the great Civil War. The Catholic religion, however, survived these upheavals, and its survival was due in no small measure to that man of iron will and master mind, the Rt. Rev. John McGill, Bishop of Richmond. This bishop is considered one of the most learned men that the American hierarchy has ever produced. As a controversialist, he had no superior. The two books which he has left behind him show the great range and depth of his mind, which was a veritable storehouse of knowledge. Amongst the principal acts of his regime are to be specially mentioned the building and dedication of St. Mary's German Church, at Fourth and Marshall Streets, in 1851, and that of St. Patrick's, on Twenty-fifth Street, in 1859. During these years various priests labored at different times in Richmond, the racial of whose deeds would prove, did time and space permit, of absorbing interest.

The coming of the Benedictines into the diocese in 1860 marked a new era in the history of St. Mary's Church.

Bishops Gibbons and Keane, 1872-88. From 1872 to 1877 the Rt. Rev. James Gibbons, D. D., the present eminent cardinal of Baltimore, ruled over the diocese. His gentleness, united with strength of character, his amiable disposition and his lucidity of thought and expression, won him friends in every walk of life and of every denomination. One of his greatest acts was the building and opening of St. Peter's Boys' School and Academy in 1873. It was he, too, who in 1874, founded the Little Sisters of the Poor to take up their work in Richmond. The people of Virginia are proud to know that they have had as their bishop America's greatest churchman, James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore.

TUESDAY.

On Tuesday, November 2, at 9 A. M. a solemn high requiem mass will be offered for all the deceased prelates, priests and people of the parish. The mass will be followed by the regular ritual service for the dead.

fifth Bishop of Richmond, proved in every sense a fit successor to the great prelate who had preceded him. His remarkable oratorical powers soon made him famed as one of the most eloquent bishops ever given by America to the church. The mere announcement that he was to preach was of itself sufficient to pack any church. During his great Lenten discourses the capacity of the old cathedral would be severely taxed. His burning zeal found vent in various undertakings.

In 1881 the vicar-general and pastor at the cathedral, the Very Rev. Francis Janssens, was consecrated Bishop of Natchez in the old cathedral. He died later as Archbishop of New Orleans. Father Janssens was one of the most beloved priests who ever labored in Richmond. His departure from a field where he had won the hearts of all with whom he came in contact occasioned widespread sorrow, which, however, was mitigated by the news that he had been succeeded as pastor and vicar-general by his friend, beloved like himself, the present efficient Bishop of Richmond.

The Coming of the Xaverian Brothers.

The same year Bishop Keane induced the Xaverian Brothers to take charge of St. Peter's Boys' Academy. Their splendid success in educating and training these simple but imperishable words:

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and charitable institutions. The number of churches built under his direction is more than thirty, with about half as many new parishes established. He has brought into the diocese various religious orders of men and women, whose educational and charitable work has been a notable feature of his regime.

If we take into account the fact that Bishop Van de Vyver lived and labored at the old cathedral for about thirty years, his stay there surpassing that of any other priest or prelate, we can understand now closely interwoven his life has been with that of the parishioners of old St. Peter's, and we can further understand their tender love and solicitude for the chief shepherd, who for so many years has shared their joys and their sorrows.

Bishop Van de Vyver is the last bishop who will ever live at, and have as his episcopal church, the old cathedral. The parishioners of St. Peter's have stoically accepted the inevitable, the transferring of the cathedral to another parish.

"They find consolation in the glory that is past and the memory of their last great and beloved bishop, the Rt. Rev. Augustine Van de Vyver. And to the new cathedral they would faintly exclaim: 'All hail! May the glory of the future be as great as our glory of the past!'"

The Coming of the Apostolic Delegates. The greatest ceremony in the history of the old cathedral occurred on Wednesday, June 3, 1903, when His Excellency, Monsignor Diomedeo Falconio, delegate apostolic, made formal entry into the diocese. Never before in the history of the Old Dominion had a papal delegate come to be received in the diocese. Never before had such welcome been accorded a great church dignitary. The scene was one of the most splendid and beautiful visiting prelates practically the entire clergy of the diocese, a select congregation that packed the church to the doors, the tasteful decorations, the harmonious singing, the grand ceremonies all tending to the occasion one that will ever live in the memory of the Catholics of Richmond.

The address of welcome by Bishop Van de Vyver, on the part of the clergy, and that by John C. Hagan, on the part of the laity, with the grand procession of the clergy and people all filled with fervid feeling and eloquence. The reception of the same evening accorded the delegate and visiting clergy by Dr. George Ben Johnston, Richmond's celebrated surgeon, greatness in Catholic church affairs of Richmond.

St. Peter's of To-Day.

The partial remodeling and frescoing of St. Peter's in 1907 has made the venerable church even more devotional than ever. A fitting climax to the diamond jubilee year has been the completion of St. Peter's rectory, already pronounced one of the most beautiful and up-to-date rectories in the entire South. The building, as well as that of the McGill and Knights of Columbus Home, erected on ground donated by the parish through the bishop and the pastor, was designed by Carl Ruehrmann, Richmond's well-known architect, and constructed by the Immaculate R. A. Slevens.

And so the one hundred and eightieth year's existence of the parish has arrived; the seventy-fifth anniversary of the church is at hand! Dear old St. Peter's! Thou venerated temple of God! Thou earthly abode of the Most High! Thou hallowed by the feet of saintly men and saintly women! Salve! To thee do we come! Our feelings to-day are those of tender love, the love of the child for its mother. And as we enter into thy sacred portals on this, the occasion of thy diamond jubilee, our gratitude prompts us to cry out, "This is the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!"